

# MERINGUE SWIRLS

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## INGREDIENTS

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3 large egg whites, room temperature	1 teaspoon finely grated fresh orange zest or lemon zest
3/4 cup sugar	Gel-paste food coloring, I used blue and red
1/2 vanilla bean, seeds scraped	
Large pinch of salt	
Large pinch of cream of tartar	

## LET'S MAKE IT!

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Preheat oven to 200° F.

Combine egg whites and sugar in a heatproof bowl or over a double-boiler. Add vanilla bean seeds. Set bowl over a pot of simmering water, and stir until sugar dissolves and mixture is warm, about 3 minutes.

Add salt and cream of tartar.

Beat with a mixer on medium-high speed until stiff, glossy peaks form and meringue is mostly cooled, about 7 minutes. Beat in zest.

Using a small paintbrush (or toothpick) line vertical stripes of food coloring inside a pastry bag fitted with a round tip (or with the end simply cut off).

Fill bag with meringue, and pipe 1 3/4-inch circular shapes (they don't need to be perfect rounds) 2 inches apart on 2 parchment-lined baking sheets. As you finish piping each shape, apply less pressure to pastry bag, and swirl the tip off in a circular motion.

Bake meringues until crisp on the outside but still soft inside, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack.